

SICC MEETING MINUTES

Truman Building, Room 400

November 9, 2007

Members Present:

Joyce Jackman
Dr. Patsy Carter
Carissa Mattern
Wendy Witcig
Joyce Sims

Leslie Elpers
Stacey Owsley
Kathy Fuger
Lois Sandbothe
Melinda Sanders

Debra Fiasco
Linda Bohrer
Kathy Daulton

Members Not Present:

Paula Neese
Kim Oligschlaeger

Senator Scott T. Rupp

Pamela Speer

DESE Staff Present

CJ Hubbard
Judy Goans

Dale Carlson

Bill Connelly

To review copies of handouts referenced in the minutes below, go to the following website:
<http://dese.mo.gov/divspeced/FirstSteps/SICCpage.html> and click on "Handouts" for the
November 9, 2007 meeting.

Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions – Lisa Robbins was unable to attend the meeting and asked Kathy Fuger to chair the meeting in her absence. Kathy brought the meeting to order at 8:45. Introductions were made.

Approval of the SICC Minutes – Kathy Fuger asked for a motion to accept the minutes from the September meeting. Wendy Witcig made a motion and Joyce seconded the motion. Motion passed with Melinda Sanders and Stacey Owsley abstaining.

Financial Update – Dale Carlson reported that the "A" report consisted of another couple of good months on the financial side. In terms of dollars, expenditures and revenue, the First Steps program is in pretty good shape. The direct service costs have increased a little due to the first check run after the implementation of the provider rate change. Another check run went out yesterday, which was the second billing cycle at the higher rates. The catch up payment (which picks up provider billing from July 1 to current) should occur with the December 6 check run and then we should be completely caught up on the new rates. Historical data from child count and cost per child have now been included in the "A" report. This is the first year we have received First Steps service coordination costs from DMH, therefore, the 2007 column for cost per child (considering total program costs) now reflects separately, DESE costs only (\$3,078) and DESE plus DMH service coordination costs (\$3,202). Costs per child (for direct services only) – DESE

costs only: \$1,959; Costs per child (for direct services only) – DESE costs plus DMH service coordination costs: \$2,082.

The “B” report does not indicate any budget information of concern. The October expenditure for provider mileage was only \$511 for 4 providers. Dale stated that he wasn’t certain why these numbers were so low but it could just be the timing of when claims were sent in and when this report was generated. The direct services expenditures on this report reflect that our average for the year is increasing slightly compared to last year which is to be expected as we begin to see the impact of higher provider rates. Dale stated that the financial picture for First Steps appears to be pretty solid.

Data Report – Bill Connelly distributed updated data for the FY2007 SPP/APR. He stated that in September he had presented preliminary SPP/APR data for FY 2007 to the SICC. The data contained in this report is finalized (except for Indicators 1, 7 and 8) and broken out by each SPOE office. Bill explained the meaning of each Indicator and the data included in each Indicator. DESE will be analyzing any data in this report that is unusually high or low compared to previous years’ data. All states will be receiving a visit from OSEP in the next 3 years and we need to make sure that our data is valid.

Bill stated that DESE just received the draft report from the Office of Social and Economic Data Analysis (OSED) regarding the First Steps Family Survey. The report confirmed that the survey data DESE has been collecting is valid. The DESE response rate to the survey is 30% and the OSED response rate was 44%, however, the OSED response rate was higher because they followed up with families who had not returned their survey. OSED will be sending DESE an expanded report in early December, at which point DESE will finalize their Indicator 4 data for the SPP/APR.

The council discussed the problem with Indicator 8 (Transition Meeting Timelines). Joyce stated that has always been weak, and DESE has been monitoring this. The area directors also have this as a top technical assistance item because it is an area that each office struggles with. Joyce said that DESE could explore looking at a new activity to add for addressing these issues of timely meetings. Joyce stated that transition is an indicator from which OSEP expects 100% compliance because it impacts families and children detrimentally if it is not met. Joyce recommended that this issue be an agenda item for an area directors meeting with the ECSE coalition. DESE may also want to provide some written guidance to our providers to help them realize the importance of these meetings. Joyce stated that the First Steps transition module should be available by mid-December or January. This module will be offered free of charge, and DESE will ask that all providers and district special education staff take it. MPACT is also coming out with a transition booklet.

Joyce suggested that the next time the area directors meet they could also include Debra Fiasco, from the Department of Mental Health, so that the DMH offices would be consistently using the same transition timelines as the SPOE offices.

Bill distributed a document on SPP/APR Indicator 3 (Early Childhood Outcomes) improvement activities. The outcomes are evaluated and a rating is required to be given to children from birth to age 5 in the 3 target areas. As a state, Missouri has until 2010 to come up with targets for this data. DESE is in the process of implementing an assessment tool and it could be used as an improvement activity for this Indicator. Joyce reported that one of the SPOE offices will be piloting the DAYC assessment tool within the next few days. DESE is waiting to purchase the DAYC until we receive feedback on how well it worked for the SPOE office.

Member Issues – Linda Bohrer with the Missouri Department of Insurance (DOI) updated the council on the insurance requirements associated with Senate Bill 500. Each year the Missouri Department of Insurance and DESE send a joint letter to insurance carriers requesting a declaration of payment option for the next calendar year. This year's letters were sent in October and are due back by November 23. The DOI is working with their Market Conduct Section to determine what actions can be taken to recover unpaid claims. A very small number of insurance carriers chose to pay by direct claims; however, the problems associated with the processing of direct claims have been significant to the program. The CFO is also working through these problems directly with the carriers. Another issue being addressed by the DOI Market Conduct Section relates to the insurance carriers who indicate that Senate Bill 500 doesn't apply to them. Market Conduct will include an analysis of their decision in that regard during their regular review cycle with the carrier.

The DOI is required to submit a written report annually to the legislature on the number of First Steps children with private insurance and the amount of revenue collected for the program from that source. The first report was submitted last January and didn't contain much detailed information because of the short time period associated with that report. This year the DOI will have considerably more data to report and may also report on the cost to implement insurance billing versus the monetary benefit to the program from claims paid. The program has collected \$80,000 to \$90,000 from direct claims billing; however, the cost to the program to implement direct claims billing was in the \$400,000 range. Other issues around insurance billing include the application of lifetime caps and yearly session caps when First Steps bills for the mandated coverage of First Steps services. Linda stated that the report from the Department of Insurance will go to the Speaker of the House in January 2008.

Compliance Update – CJ Hubbard reported that the standards and indicators were finalized before the first monitoring in October and presented to the SPOE directors at their meeting yesterday. This information is also available on the DESE website. In mid-October DESE sent out the criteria for our determinations, as required by OSEP, to each SPOE and DMH agency. The determinations are divided into 4 categories which are: meets requirements, needs assistance, needs intervention and needs substantial intervention. All offices received a determination of "meets requirements" except for the DMH office from Kansas City which received a determination of "needs assistance". DESE felt that our criteria will probably change as we continue to do this on an annual basis. Each state was given a determination and Missouri received a determination of "needs assistance" because of Indicator 1 and 8. CJ reported that we will still be out of compliance on Indicator 8, transition meeting timelines, because of the Kansas City DMH office. DESE now has a system in place for Indicator 1, which is timely services, so it should be corrected. This is the very first year that DESE has been required to do determinations. We report this information to the SICC every year but we don't have to report it publicly. The council discussed the problems with timelines and CJ was asked to give some guidance to the SPOE directors for the Part C timelines for the transition to Part B and the 6 month and yearly reviews. CJ was asked at the SPOE meeting yesterday to also provide some information about the due process and child complaints since April of 2004. DESE does have preliminary information but CJ would like to give our data people time to break the information out.

DESE Update – Joyce Jackman reported that DESE is seriously looking into discontinuing the charge for taking the training modules when providers initially enroll in First Steps. The new transition module was paid for with grant money and will be offered to the providers at no cost. DESE will decide shortly if the fees can be waived for providers currently taking the modules.

The department no longer has a contract with Identix for fingerprinting. The new contract is with Integrated Biometric Technology. The cost is still the same so if you have providers that are looking to enroll they should check the DESE website under Teacher Certification for more details. DESE will also add the additional information on fingerprinting to the First Steps' website.

The Central Finance Office (CFO) will recycle provider claims from July 2007 to the present to pay the increased rate as soon as possible. This process isn't happening as quickly as DESE hoped, mainly because of the number of claims filed. The CFO was required to write a new program to enable them to pay claims on the December 6 check run. All procedure codes should be paying out at the higher rate by that time. Joyce stated that she has received numerous positive comments from the field and interest in the program after the rate increase was issued.

Joyce has been talking to approximately half of the SPOE regions about piloting new concepts for implementation in their region; however, nothing has been finalized yet. DESE has a number of providers who are very interested in trying the team concept addressed by Robin McWilliam during his workshops in Missouri. Dr. McWilliam will be coming back to Missouri for a 2-day train-the-trainer session in March 2008. Teams from various regions in the state and the area directors will participate in the March training and then schedule additional trainings regionally throughout the state.

Joyce will be attending the National Early Childhood Conference in Virginia the first of December and she stated that she hopes to bring back some new programmatic concepts for consideration by the state. OSEP will be releasing a multi-year study on the topic of effective services provided in an integrated fashion. In Missouri we are on the cutting edge of what is good and promising practice in the field of early intervention.

DESE recognizes the need to support the service coordinators across the state regarding early identification and intervention for children with autism. Dr. Janet Farmer, with the Thompson Center in Columbia, will conduct training in mid December with the area directors related to autism and the birth to 3 populations. Joyce indicated that she is also part of the Rapid Response group for Boone County, a pilot program to coordinate services for children and families within the community. This group has developed a curriculum on autism and the First Steps area directors will become trainers for this curriculum in order to get the information into the SPOE regions across the state. Rapid Response also produced a brochure available across the state that will walk families through the process of finding help and support for their child with autism. Debra Fiasco with the Department of Mental Health stated that the group distributed 1000 brochures specific to resources for the mid-Missouri area and hopes to have additional brochures available soon for statewide distribution. Joyce stated that DESE hopes that in the next 2 months the area directors will have more information to help support the individuals in the field regarding autism. DESE will provide an update on the autism training at the next SICC meeting.

SPOE Operations

- Diana Patten reported for SPOE 8 and stated that they have been working hard on the 60/40 split with DMH. They have also been working on provider recruitment and have a new provider in the eastern rural counties. Their office has another new provider that wants to work full time for First Steps and cover several counties. Diana stated that the rate increase was a significant factor in her coming to work for First Steps and it has also boosted the morale with the providers that we currently have. Their SPOE office is

moving forward and hoping to have some teams together by the next SICC meeting. They will be sending their pilot information to Joyce.

- Niki Clover reported for SPOE 6 and said things are going well and their office is gearing up for monitoring next week. The 60/40 split with DMH has been a problem but they are working on it. Their office has 2 loosely formed evaluation and assessment teams and they are still working on provider recruitment, especially in the rural areas.
- Sarah Parker reported for SPOE 7 that they are fully staffed and things are going well. Normally in the summer referrals are low but this year they were high and referrals have dropped off since then. The child find numbers have decreased and the SPOE office is working with the RICC on this issue. Their agency went through accreditation and the accreditation company was very impressed with the First Steps program.
- Sarah Parker reported for SPOE 5, in the absence of Jana Robinson, that their office has slowed down with referrals and they continue to work on child find. Their office is also fully staffed.
- Cassie Panton reported for SPOE 10 that many providers are interested in coming back to the program since the provider rate increase. They have held provider meetings and their office is going to try the teaming approach in a few small areas.
- Karen Jacobi reported for SPOE 3 that their office is fully staffed. Their SPOE has hosted 3 provider meetings in collaboration with their area director to enhance communication. Their provider enrollment has also increased.
- Juli Hillyer reported for SPOE 2 that their office does not have a staff shortage at this time. Their office is continuing to work with DMH on daily operations. They currently have 50 providers, independent and agency representatives, who are serving as members of their evaluation and assessment team. They continue to have people interested in becoming First Step providers for the St. Louis county area.
- Anne Bryan reported for SPOE 9 that their office has been successful with the 60/40 split with DMH. Their SPOE office is also working on a trial evaluation and assessment team.

RICC reports

- Region 1 RICC reported that membership is great but the entire executive committee is leaving so they are in need of a co-chair. They have been busy with several presentations and working on family networking events that bring families together to get to know their service coordinators and providers. They are also hoping to find parents that would be interested in joining the RICC at these events. Their committee has been working hard to find a Child Find coordinator. The RICC has also been working with the local school districts on transitioning.
- Region 9 RICC reported that their SPOE office has a new director, Anne Bryan. They have divided their region into 3 sub-regions and one of the 3 officers from the RICC will attend each sub-region meeting. After attending the meetings they will come back to the RICC with the information from those meetings. The RICC has also been working on their bylaws.
- Region 3 RICC reported that they have 2 vacancies on their council, one provider and one parent representative. Their region has seen an increase in referrals which parallels the success of their provider recruitment and child find efforts. Referrals in Marion County remain low and the child find committee is working on targeting this area. The RICC has participated in several public awareness activities in their region and they have also recruited several new providers in their region.
- Region 5 RICC reported that they continue to meet monthly to build committees and to frame goals. They will continue to share information on First Steps at several upcoming

health fairs and conferences for parents. A survey was sent to current and past providers assessing issues with First Steps. Currently they have received responses from about 25 current providers. The Provider Recruitment committee is working on a proposal for an evaluation and assessment team to work together in the southern part of the region. They are also working on a bi-weekly e-mail to be sent out to providers with quick tips for therapy ideas and information about First Steps.

- Region 7 RICC reported that they are looking closely at the continuing decrease in child count in their region. They have asked members of their RICC to distribute brochures throughout the region and will also be brainstorming their child find efforts. They have asked the SPOE service coordinators to serve as liaisons between the SPOE and the RICC to assist in communication.
- Region 8 RICC has 2 new chairpersons. They have been focusing their child find on counties that currently don't have any First Steps kids and they will be going to these areas to talk with social service agencies and schools to get the word out about First Steps. Their RICC has also been participating in several fairs in the area to try to get the word out about First Steps. They still need more parent participation in their RICC.
- Region 6 RICC is still in need of parent members on their RICC. The RICC is developing an informational flyer for physician and community agency offices. Provider recruitment continues throughout their region. They are also developing a provider survey, similar to the one that the Kansas City RICC developed.
- Region 10 RICC reported that they have made a lot of progress since Cassie Panton was named the new SPOE director. The group has recently had 2 meetings with the new organization with very good leadership from a First Steps parent.
- Region 2 RICC reported that they are still looking for 2 individuals in the medical profession and 2 parents for their RICC. Their RICC conducted several activities throughout their region, some with the collaboration of Region 1 and 2. The provider recruitment committee has developed an evaluation/assessment tool and their new goal is to develop competency criteria for peer reviewers.

Member issues – Joyce was asked if there was room for “other” on the RICC report. Joyce stated that the RICC report can be modified to add that section.

Joyce discussed the challenges the SICC faces related to processing appointments to the council. At this time only 1 parent member is currently appointed to the council. DESE is still waiting for appointments from the governor's office to the SICC. Current information related to the membership of the SICC was resent to the Boards and Commissions Office by DESE several weeks ago and they are waiting for a reply from that office. At the previous SICC meeting it was decided to convene a sub-committee of members to address the issue of member recruitment and report back to the group at the November meeting. Joyce Jackman, Kathy Fuger, Kathryn Sapp and Lisa Robbins were appointed to the sub-committee and participated in a teleconference call to discuss the issues.

Kathy Fuger presented a handout to the council that discussed possible short-term and long-term strategies for building parent representation and leadership based on the discussions held by the sub-committee. Several recommendations from the sub-committee were presented and they included the following: 1) consider asking a former SICC parent member to attend meetings in order to have the parent perspective adequately represented in the council's discussions. It was suggested that Jodi Arnold may be willing to fill this role. The council agreed that it would be acceptable for Jodi to serve as an alternate for Elizabeth Spaugh. Elizabeth is technically still considered a member of the SICC until the governor appoints her replacement; however, she is

unable to continue attending meetings. 2) It was suggested that a flyer be included in the family survey or as a footer on the explanation of benefits asking for parent participation in becoming a member of the SICC or the local RICC. Joyce stated that the appointment process is the biggest hurdle that we have in getting people on the SICC. A member of the council asked if the people who are awaiting appointment at the governor's office are still interested in being on the SICC. Joyce stated that the governor's office will ask if they are still interested but she felt certain that they were. Wendy Witcig asked if she could recruit a parent as an alternate rather than another provider. Joyce said that she would look into this to see if that would be appropriate since Wendy represents the provider community. 3) Joyce said that the Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) has changed their meeting schedule from every other month to quarterly. She suggested that 4 meetings per year would be easier for everyone to attend. A suggestion was also made that the SICC could have subcommittees to focus on targeted issues or projects determined by the full council. These subcommittees could connect throughout the year via e-mail or teleconference calls that could be set up through DESE.

Wendy Witcig made a motion that the SICC move to quarterly meetings rather than every other month. Joyce Jackman seconded the motion. Leslie Elpers stated that she has come to the SICC meetings for 10 years and feels that communication will suffer if the SICC decides to change to quarterly meetings. Stacey Owsley stated that if the meetings are held quarterly there is technology that could be utilized to help maintain the open communication. Kathy Fuger asked for a vote. Everyone was in favor with Leslie Elpers opposed. Motion carried. There is no amendment needed to the bylaws to change the SICC meetings to quarterly. Our next meeting will still be in January of 2008 as scheduled. The SICC meetings for 2008 will be held on January 11, April 11, July 11 and October 10. The SICC members will need to be thinking of topical issues for the subcommittee structure for next year. It was suggested that DESE could assign an area director to each subcommittee to facilitate those discussions.

New Business – Vince Forcier from the Central Finance office once again offered their services to any SPOE office that would like to conduct a survey. The Kansas City SPOE offices reported that they did a survey through the CFO and it was very successful.

The Missouri Assistive Technology annual report was distributed to the members of the council.

Joyce Jackman made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Wendy Witcig seconded the motion. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 2:00.